

COMIC SHOP NEWS

THE RED K AWARDS



Crusaders Aim to Become a High-Impact Hit

For the past seven months, readers of the Impact line of comics from DC have been gradually introduced to a self-contained fictional universe starring five individual super-heroes and a high-team team designed to keep a watchful eye on them. While there have been occasional guest appearances and crossovers, however, there hasn't been a team adventure as such—but that will be remedied in early April with the debut of Impact's first multi-hero team book, **The Crusaders**.

The Crusaders' origin gets underway in early March with the release of **Legend of the Shield #10**, which kicks off "The Coming of the Crusaders." From there the adventure continues in **The Comet #10** (a March 5th release), **The Fly #9** (March 12th release), **The Web #9** (March 19th release), **The Jaguar #9** (March 26th release), **The Legend of the Shield #11** (April 2nd release), and ultimately, **The Crusaders #1**, which debuts on April 9th. **The Crusaders** is written by Brian Augustyn and Mark Waid and illustrated by R.A. Morales and Scott Hanna.



The story doesn't end there, though; each of the Impact titles also gets its own Annual beginning in early April, and those stories will also tie in with the Crusaders storyline. The first Impact annual is **Web Annual #1**, an April 2nd release; in the story "Earth Quest" by Strazewski, Collins, and Kwapisz, the heroes must work together to stop the Templar, who is convinced that there is a "holy grail" that can cure his disfiguring disease—and he's willing to unleash a series of environmental disasters to find it. The story continues into **The Legend of the Shield Annual #1** (April 9th), **The Comet Annual #1** (April 16th), **The Fly Annual #1** (April 23rd), **The Jaguar Annual #1** (April 30th), and **The Black Hood Annual #1** (May 6th). Each annual will be 64 pages long and will include backup stories as well.

On April 9th, DC will also release a third volume of **Who's Who In Impact Comics**, which spotlights the Crusaders, the original American Crusaders, and new characters who have appeared in the Impact titles since the last Who's Who appeared—and the all-new Shield III (!).

Furthermore, Impact will offer a special bonus to celebrate the formation of the Crusaders: each of the books involved in the rollout of the Crusaders will feature special bound-in trading cards. DC will include one card in each of the six regular books and one in each of the six annuals, while **Crusaders #1** and **Who's Who In Impact Comics #3** will each feature three cards. The trading cards, exclusively available in these books, will feature art by Gil Kane, Dan Jurgens, Michael Golden, Michael Netzer, Dick Giordano, and others. The crusade begins in early March, so don't miss out!

by WAYNE LEE

Now This Is Some Hot Artwork...

Erik Larsen's six-part "Revenge of the Sinister Six" storyline running in **Spider-Man** currently is packed with guest-stars galore, including Ghost Rider, the Hulk, Solo, Sleepwalker, Deathlok, and the Fantastic Four—but juggling all those stars (along with the Sinister Six, the villainous team led by Doctor Octopus) was the least of Erik Larsen's worries. Pitting super-heroes and supervillains against one another was a breeze—finding a place to live and work was the real challenge!

Erik Larsen, resident of Oakland, Cali-

fornia, was one of the unfortunate folks who lost his home in the Oakland fire of October; according to Danny Fingeroth, editor of **Spider-Man**, Erik lost pretty much everything in the fire except for the clothes he was wearing. All of you know how important your belongings are to you—imagine how it must feel to lose them all in a day!

Nevertheless, Erik has managed to avoid missing a single issue of **Spider-Man**—although he is having to produce slightly shorter installments for **Spider-**

Man #s 19 and 20, just to make sure he can stay caught up with the deadlines. The story still progresses as planned, and the multi-hero finale is still slated to be a battle to be remembered. To stop the story from being thrown off-schedule, though, Fingeroth says that there will now be seven parts to "Revenge of the Sinister Six," thereby splitting the second installment into two parts to give Erik some breathing room.

by LANNY LATHAM

Shadows Under the Spotlight At Innovation

It's a mid-1960's television series that became a cult favorite. In spite of its cancellation, it retained a tremendous fan following; ultimately, demand lead the producers to release the original episodes for syndication and, later, on videocassette. The network even brought it back to television in a new incarnation in more recent years.

Sounds remarkably like the story of **Star Trek**—but it isn't. It's **Dark Shadows**, the long-running gothic-horror soap opera that made an unlikely hero of a vampire named Barnabas Collins—and it's all set to become a comic book in March, 1992, courtesy of Innovation Comics.

"I remember running home from school every weekday afternoon to watch **Dark Shadows**," Innovation publisher David Campiti said. "So when I started Innovation, it was on the top of my 'wish list.' Thanks to freelancer Andy Mangels' diligent work to acquire the license for us, we have it—and I couldn't be happier."

It was 1966 when **Dark Shadows** first appeared on ABC television, kicking off a staggering 1225-episode run (more than fifteen times the number of episodes of the original **Star Trek** series—but of course, **Dark Shadows** was an ongoing soap opera, its gothic horror tones notwithstanding). Created by Dan Curtis, the show was quite unlike any other daytime drama.

"The supernatural elements, vampires and witches, added a layer of drama and intensity far beyond what a 'realistic daytime drama could offer," Curtis said. "A love affair with a vampire is not just another romance. Jonathan Frid's portrayal of Barnabas Collins was an instant success. He added humanity to his characterization and made Barnabas a tragic figure. Although he could have been only a menacing creature in the tradition of Dracula, Frid played Barnabas as a sympathetic man who is guilt-ridden by his need for blood—and desires to be a normal human again."

As the show went on, it became more overt in its supernatural elements, jumping back and forth from present to past and featuring ghosts, witches, and werewolves in addition to the series' vampire star.

Gold Key was the first to bring **Dark Shadows** to comics, but according to Innovation, "The comic book was quite far afield from the TV series, occasionally mis-identifying characters, giving Barnabas time travel powers at will, and

so forth." Needless to say, fans were less than wholly satisfied.

In January of 1991, NBC brought **Dark Shadows** back as a prime-time series starring Ben Cross as Barnabas Collins; the series never generated the excitement of the original, though, and was cancelled after eleven episodes.

And now, in March of '92, **Dark Shadows** returns to comics in a series that Innovation promises will be much more faithful than the first. "Innovation Publishing has been authorized to continue the **Dark Shadows** saga in

closely with the folks at Dan Curtis Productions. They seem happy with our handling of the project—their reaction is that our first four comics read as though we've written four excellent hours of the show and dropped them right into that spot in the TV mini-series continuity."

Upcoming storylines will be written by Maggie Thompson, **Comics Buyer's Guide** co-editor and an avid fan of the original series; and Andy Mangels, who is also scripting Innovation's **Nightmares on Elm Street** monthly series.

"The series is beautifully



comic book form; it will use likenesses for the new show in a fully-painted style and plans to elaborate on certain elements only hinted at in the new show..." According to Innovation's Diana Light, "Innovation's new comics series begins with a four-parter, 'The Winds of Remembrance,' a storyline that ties up loose ends and 'fixes' any continuity glitches in the show. It's a story Dan Curtis' people said should have been bought for the TV show."

"A lot of elements in the new series were left unexplained or underdeveloped," Campiti said. "Our first four-parter takes place in the continuity of the third hour of the miniseries, where Dr. Julia Hoffman says, 'It's been ten weeks since we've started Barnabas' cure.' A lot could happen in ten weeks—and did... We're working very

painted by E. Silas Smith," Diana Light said, "who is shooting for exact likenesses (from the second series)—and the preliminary responses we've gotten from **Dark Shadows** fans shows we're on the right track." Innovation will also release posters of some of Smith's **Dark Shadows** paintings.

Later on, Innovation plans to use scripts and storylines developed by Dan Curtis and his staff for the unproduced second season of the reincarnated **Dark Shadows**. (Incidentally, if the title for that first four-issue storyline sounds a bit derivative, it's intentional—Dan Curtis was also the producer of the miniseries **The Winds of War** and **War and Remembrance**.)

Dark Shadows #1, a late March release, is priced at \$2.50.

by CLIFF BIGGERS

COMIC SHOP NEWS

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A Comics Specialty Outlet

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A Venom-ous Enemy--and a Venom-ous Ally!



Spider-Man has confronted his nemesis Venom on several occasions—but beginning in February, Spider-Man has to call on Venom as an ally when he goes up against the even more deadly Venom-spawn, Carnage. Carnage is a serial killer who has been possessed by a piece of the symbiotic alien Venom, and he's far more deadly than the original Venom ever was. The action begins in **Amazing Spider-Man #361** and continues through April's **Amazing Spider-Man #363**. The Human Torch makes a guest appearance in **Spidey #362**, for those of you who need yet another reason to check out this storyline. Oh, yes, here's one more point worth noting: writer David Michelinie is joined by returning Spidey artist par excellence Mark Bagley, who took a couple of issues off just to catch up from the bi-weekly **Spidey** schedule this past fall. Look for **Amazing Spider-Man #361** on February 13th, **AS #362** on March 12th, and **AS #363** on April 10th.

Bigger Sins

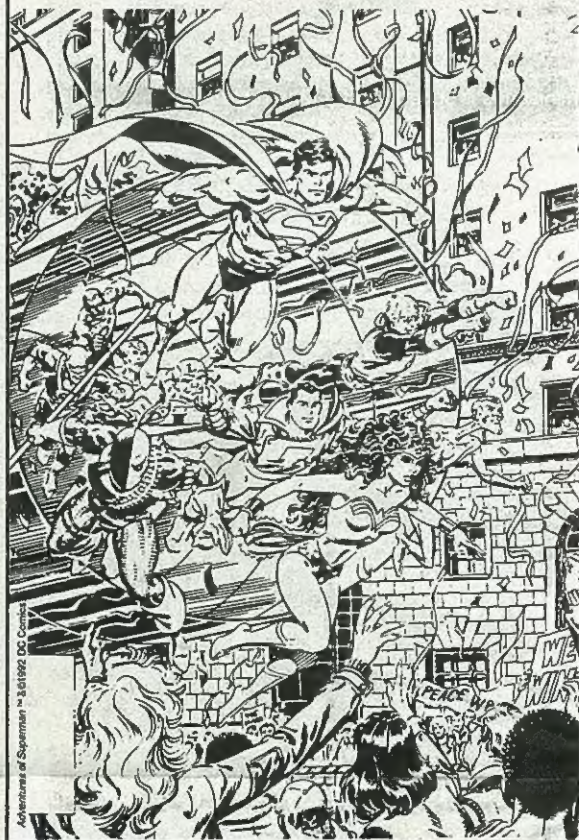


Frank Miller's Sin City, which began its run with eight-page installments in **Dark Horse Presents**, has grown in the telling: **Dark Horse Presents #60** presents a special 21-page installment of Sin City as Marv comes closer to a confrontation with Goldie's killer. The book will also feature two other short stories: **The Creep** by John Arcudi and Dale Eaglesham, and a new **Earth Boys** story by Cliff Biggers, Brett Brooks, and Dave Johnson that takes the Earth Boys back "home"—but Earth would really prefer it if the Boys stayed away!

Frank Miller and Lynn Varley supply the cover for **DHP #60**, a \$2.25 comic scheduled for March 5th release.

The Job Market Is Picking Up...

Maybe George Bush is right about the economy undergoing a turn-around: in the next few months, a couple of members of the Superman supporting cast will find employment. First, laid-off reporter Jimmy Olsen gets his job back in **Adventures of Superman #489**; this issue is an epilogue to the "Panic in the Sky" storyline, so it guest-stars Batman, Wonder Woman, Deathstroke the Terminator, Captain Marvel, Guy Gardner, and others. Jerry Ordway, Tom Grummett, and Doug Hazlewood handle the creative honors for this issue; look for it on February 27th. A week later, the new Supergirl gets a lucrative job offer from Lex Luthor, Jr., who hopes to hire her as his bodyguard. **Action Comics #676** is written by Roger Stern and guest illustrated by Jackson Guice; look for it on March 5th.



What's In Store For Iron Man's Future?

John Byrne has left the writing honors on **Iron Man** to Len Kaminski, who has some interesting things in store for Iron Man in the future. In fact, one of those interesting things is a trip into Iron Man's future in order to find a cure for the disease that will otherwise kill Tony Stark. The last thing Iron Man expected to find in the future, though, was a race of beings who worshiped him as a god. That's right—Iron Man meets the Stark (you remember them from the pages of **Guardians of the Galaxy**, right?) in **Iron Man #280**, illustrated by Kevin Hopgood and Andrew Pepoy. Look for it on April 2nd—which isn't far in the future at all compared to the time trip Iron Man's got in store for him...

They're On an Ecological Crusade

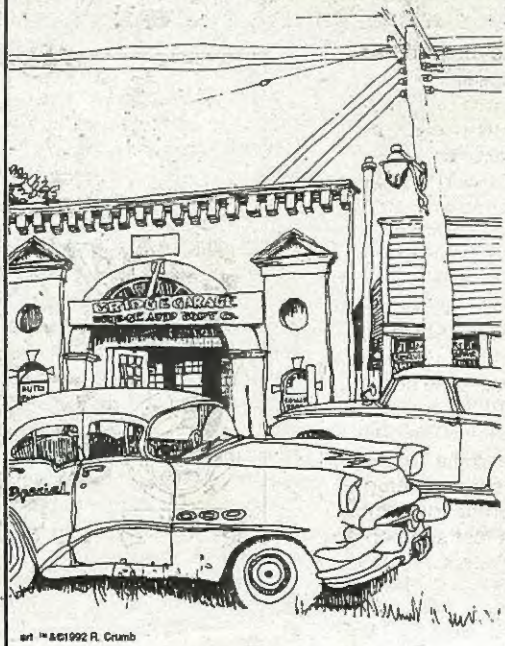
The Toxic Avenger didn't quite click as a Marvel comic; maybe it was because fans couldn't tell just how serious the book was supposed to be. Well, there'll be no mistaking the tone of **Toxic Crusaders**, a new series starring the Toxic Avenger and his environmentally aware friends. Each month, the Toxic Crusaders do battle against villains like Dr. Killmoff, Psycho, Bonehead, and the Radiation Rangers, courtesy of such noteworthy writers as Simon Furman, Steve Gerber, and Stan Lee. **Toxic Crusaders #1**, a March 5th release based on the animated series and toy line rather than the original Troma film, is priced at \$1.25.

Sketchbooks Offer Far More Than Crumbs From Crumb's Career

Fantagraphics has offered **Robert Crumb** fans a comprehensive overview of his published works in **The Complete Crumb Comics**, now on its sixth volume. So what else could they possibly offer the Crumb collector? How about a look at the legendary **Robert Crumb Sketchbooks**? According to Fantagraphics, "From the beginning of his illustrious comics career, R. Crumb has maintained an ongoing sketchbook in which he draws virtually every day... Five editions of Crumb's sketchbooks have been released in

Germany and have sporadically been made available in this country at an average retail price of \$75. Volume #1 of Fantagraphics' series contains material from 1964-65, never before published anywhere (including in the German editions)."

Fantagraphics' **R. Crumb Sketchbook** series is a companion to **The Complete Crumb Comics**, published in the same formats (trade paperback for \$19.95, hardcover for \$35, and signed and numbered hardcover for \$75). Each volume is 180 pages in length; the first volume also features sixteen pages of full color. Fantagraphics plans to release three sketchbooks volumes per year. "Don't let the word sketchbook fool you," Fantagraphics warns. "Although these drawings are sketches in the sense that Crumb draws them spontaneously and in wildly varying locations, most of them are highly developed illustrations, fully inked, and meticulously rendered." **R. Crumb Sketchbook Volume One** is scheduled for March release.



DC Makes the World a Little Cooler

Here's a strange case of reality imitating art: this summer, Paramount Pictures is releasing a film entitled **Cool World**, a combination live action/animated work by acclaimed creator Ralph Bakshi. **Cool World** is a dimension inhabited by animated "doodles," whose lives are known to those on Earth through the **Cool World** comic book, written and illustrated by Jack Deebs. As it turns out, there really will be a **Cool World** comic book—but it'll be written by Michael Eury and illustrated by the team of Stephen DeStefano, Chuck Fiala, and Bill Wray.



The comic book will tell the story of Frank Harris, the only flesh-and-blood human in the animated "Cool World," who finds himself in the middle of an underworld struggle for possession of the "ultimate weapon" that can destroy the animated "doodles." DC's comic is not an adaptation of the film; instead, it is a **Cool World** comic book as is featured in the film (which will star Kim Basinger, Gabriel Byrne, and Brad Pitt). After DC's miniseries is completed, there will be a one-shot adaptation of the film. **Cool World #1**, a \$1.75 new-format comic, is scheduled for March 12th release.

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Are All His Efforts in Vein?...

Herbert West is a man with a mission--a mission to prove that death isn't final at all, but is a reversible process. Unfortunately, in the **Re-Animator** prequel **Dawn of the Re-Animator**, West is having trouble convincing Swiss authorities that his theories are valid. They think he's guilty of trying to kill his mentor, Dr. Hans Gruber, rather than of trying to revive him. West can prove himself innocent if he can just recover Gruber's body--but that proves rather difficult, for someone has stolen the corpse! Or is it possible that it left under its own power?...

Dawn of the Re-Animator, written by Bill Spangler and illustrated by Jose Malaga, is a totally original comic book prequel to the first **Re-Animator** film, chronicling Herbert West's misadventures in his pre-Arkham days. The first issue of the four issue miniseries is scheduled for March release.



The Shadow #1 ©1992 Condé Nast

Who Knows?...

Okay, we've had Batman: Year One and Captain America: Year One, and there's a graphic novel in the works that is effectively a Daredevil Year One--are you ready for 'The Shadow: Year One'? That's what you'll find in a two-part story appearing in **The Shadow Strikes!** #s 30 and 31, beginning on February 27th. Joe Cardona has found a copy of Lamont Cranston's diary--and in its pages is revealed a 1929 meeting in Istanbul with the mysterious Kent Allard; it also reveals how their relationship leads to the birth of the Shadow! Gerard Jones is the author of this origin tale, which is illustrated by Rod Whigham.

A Trip Down Memory Lane...

Remember **Marvel Two-In-One**? Well, just in case you weren't collecting comics back in the 70's and early 80's, we'll remind you: **Marvel Two-In-One** was a team book that starred the Thing and another member of the Marvel Universe each month. The new four-issue limited series **The Thing** will give you an idea of what **Marvel Two-In-One** was like as it reprints some of the best Thing team-ups, featuring heroes such as Nick Fury, Ghost Rider, the Beast, Wonder Man, and others. The creative teams on these stories aren't too bad, either--they include Ron Wilson, Tom DeFalco, and Frank Miller, among others. **The Thing #1**, a \$1.25 comic, is scheduled for February 13th release.

That's not the only 70's flashback Marvel has in store; **Warlock #1**, the premiere issue of a six-issue reprint series, features Jim Starlin's classic **Warlock** series, featuring the sort of cosmic adventure Starlin is well known for in such titles as **Silver Surfer**, **Warlock**, and **Infinity Gauntlet**. Starlin is both the writer and artist for the stories in this reprint series--and that's great news for those of us who miss Starlin's stellar artwork. **Warlock #1**, a 48-page comic priced at \$2.50, is scheduled for March 5th release.

New Portfolio Features Really Sharp Art



Art ©1992 Clyde Caldwell

Clyde Caldwell has developed quite a fan following for his fantasy and gaming illustrations; his fans will be pleased to hear that Caldwell has selected a half-dozen of his best paintings for collection in **Clyde Caldwell's Kingdom of Knives Portfolio: Set One**. This \$25 portfolio features six 11" x 14" full-color plates in a clear plastic slipcase, with a signature sheet and a hand-numbered certificate of authenticity. **Kingdom of Knives** is limited to only 2000 copies, so if you can't live without it, be sure to let your local comic shop know that you're interested ASAP--and tell 'em you heard about it in **CSN**, okay?...

From the Darkness Sees Daylight Again

From the Darkness was a sleeper hit in 1991; the vampire series sold out so quickly that Malibu Graphics was forced to rush-release a trade paperback to satisfy the readers who couldn't find the original issues. Since then, **From the Darkness** creators Ed Polgardy and Jim Balent have found a new publishing home and have prepared a sequel to this horror hit.

From the Darkness Book II: Blood Vows picks up a year after the end of the first series. The vampire Desnoirs is

back, hungry for blood and revenge, and Ray Thorn, the Vietnam vet who defeated Desnoirs in the first series, is back



with his own small army of renegade bikers who have joined him to destroy Desnoirs' unholy fol-

lows forever. Cry For Dawn Productions, the company responsible for the horror anthology series Cry For Dawn, is the new publisher of **From the Darkness**. The company promises improved printing quality, including ultra-white paper and fully painted cardstock covers. Each issue will feature 28 pages of story and art and additional sketchbook pages by Jim Balent. **From the Darkness Book II: Blood Vows #1**, a \$2.50 comic, is scheduled for March release.

So How Do They Determine Casualties?

Fantaco Comics & Tundra Publishing, whose previous joint venture was Kevin Eastman's brutal war tale **No Guts Or Glory**, are joining forces again this April for an equally brutal but much less realistic war tale, **Zombie War**. Written by Kevin Eastman and Tom Skulan and illustrated by Kevin Eastman and Eric Talbot, **Zombie War** is described as 'a rockin' screamin' high voltage action adventure horror series' with a worldwide scenario that will ultimately lead into other projects after the comics' two issue run is completed. At the same time the first issue is released, Tundra and Fantaco will also produce a **Zombie War camouflage t-shirt** (so what color of camouflage do zombies use?...tombstone gray?...); other shirts will follow.

Later in the summer, fans will be able to enjoy the **Zombie War Handbook**, supplying detailed information on characters, weapons, and vehicles that are part of the series (some of which didn't make it into the first two-issue run) and the **Zombie War Card Set**, featuring full-color paintings detailing the **Zombie War** story--and once again, many of the cards will detail events that didn't make it into the comic book series. Finally, in the fall, Fantaco and Tundra will release the **Zombie Warbook**, a 100-page hardcover that will be priced at approximately \$15; there will also be a signed limited edition.

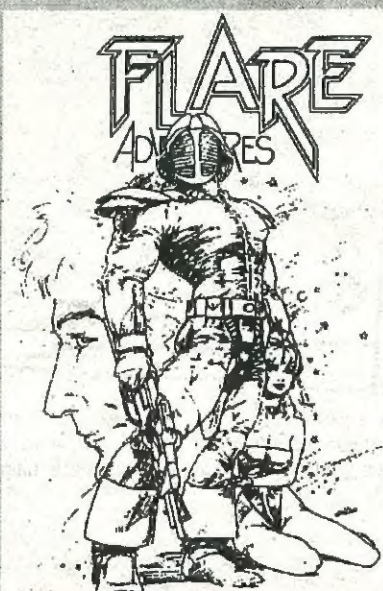


Pop Goes the Wheelie

Ghost Rider made comic book history last year when it became the first comic with a glow-in-the-dark cover; this March, Ghost Rider sets another precedent when it becomes the first Marvel comic with a four-page die-cut and a pop-up! Ghost Rider #25's story sets Blackout on the trail of Dan Ketch and his family--and when he rips out Dan's throat, it seems like he's accomplished what he set out to do. Ghost Rider tries to transform in time to save Dan--and that's where the die-cut and the pop-up comes in. Ghost Rider #25 is also a double-sized issue, which means that fans will get twice as much Ghost Rider action courtesy of writer Howard Mackie and new series artist Ron Wagner. This celebratory issue also includes pin-ups by Adam Kubert, Ron Garney, Tom Palmer, Richard Case, and Ron Wagner. **Ghost Rider #25**, a \$2.75 comic, is scheduled for March 12th release.

Howard Bender Displays a Flare For Comics Art

Howard Bender, creator of **Mister Fixitt**, joins the Hero Comics art team in 1992 with **Flare Adventures #4**, in which he illustrates a story of Flare and her sister Sparkplug when they were little girls. Bender will also take over from Stan Sakai as the regular artist for the 'Dolf' stories that will appear in both **Flare Adventures** and **Flare First Edition** (Dolf is the stick-boy created by Flare and Sparkplug in their own series of comic books). Bender will also be one of the six pencil artists who will be working on the summer's **Flare/League of Champions/Southern Knights** crossover tale; George Perez will supply the finished art for the series. **Flare Adventures #4**, a 90¢ comic, is slated for late March release.



Flare #4 ©1992 Hero Comics

If You're Pining For a New Turtles Book...

This April, the ever-popular Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles are featured in a second ongoing title, **Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles Adventures Special**. The first 64-page issue features two new stories, both written by Stephen Sullivan. In the lead story, 'If a Tree Should Fall,' the Turtles, April, and Splinter are caught in the middle of a struggle between loggers, environmentalists--and Bigfoot! Brian Thomas supplies the art for this tale, while Bill Wray illustrates the second story, 'The Last Sea Serpent,' pitting the Turtles against an obsessed whaling captain determined to track down the world's last sea serpent. **Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles Adventures Special #1**, an April 30th release, is priced at \$2.50.

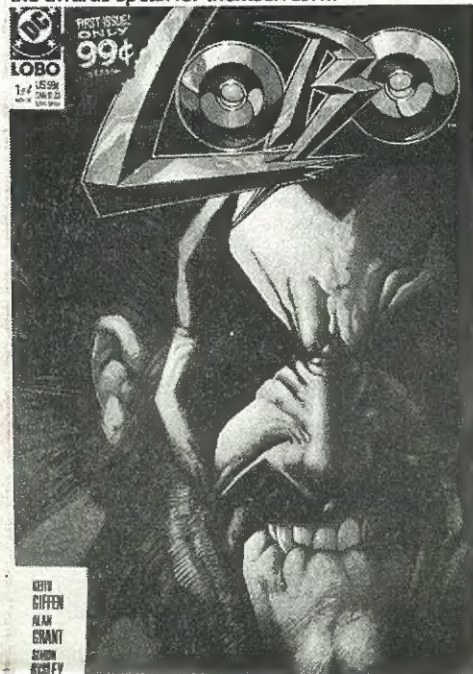


TNMT #1 ©1992 Mirage Studios

CSN's Red K Awards

Another year, another few thousand comics... It's been a busy year in the comic shops, with record sales on key titles and more books than ever before. Once again, **CSN** takes a look back at the year's best worst, and most commentable in order to presents its Red K Awards.

In case you've forgotten (after all, it has been a full year...), The **Red K Awards** are so named because—as with the effects of the Red K so fondly remembered by readers of the old Mort Weisinger-edited Superman books—you never know what you can expect next...but why not let the awards speak for themselves?...



Surefire Hit Series Award

Lobo
Robin
Cable

These characters have generated an immense amount of excitement during the year—but unfortunately for their many fans, none of them have their own books on the schedule. Let's hope that next year, all three of them find a home in their own series (there's some hope: both Lobo and Cable have their own limited series coming up later this year—and while that isn't a regular ongoing series, it's certainly better than nothing at all).

Bucking The Trend Award

Allens: Genocide 1

In a time when a great many publishers have had



trouble getting their books out on time, Dark Horse actually released the first issue of this miniseries a few weeks earlier than expected! What are you guys trying to do, confuse us?...

"I Wish It Could Be Christmas Every Day" Award

All those Christmas stories that showed up after Christmas

Don't get me wrong—I like Christmas as much as the next guy. But for some reason, Christmas stories seem a lot less spirited when they show up after New Year's. Come on, folks: check out the calendars and see when these books are shipping before you schedule those holiday tales in '92, okay?...

The "What's That Again?" Award

Robin II: The Joker's Wild

DC's new **Robin** miniseries was a hit—but trying to explain the complicated plans behind the multiple covers, some with holograms and some without, was only slightly less complicated than explaining the IRS 1040 form. Maybe DC could have produced a special booklet explaining the plan—perhaps in two editions, one with a hologram and one without...

The Slow and Linger-ing Death Award

On A Pale Horse 2

There aren't too many books that manage to go for a full year between issues, but this adaptation of the Piers Anthony **Incarnations of Immortality** novel is one that did. Do you realize that, at this rate, Innovation will finish adapting the last **Incarnations of Immortality** novel in the year 2032—if Piers doesn't write any more between now and then?...

"Foiled Again" Award

Silver Surfer 50
Hellraiser 10

The foil embossing on **Silver Surfer #50** generated such fan excitement that the book had to go through three printings—but the best foil cover of the year was actually on the much rarer **Hellraiser #10**. It's a nifty laser-etched foil cover that actually got overlooked by a lot of fans—undeservedly so, we might add.

"It's About Time" Award

DC's Sandman Watch
Honorable Mention: Fossil's Rocketeer Watch

There are oodles of comic book-inspired watches—but none of them score as high on the cool-meter as DC's **Sandman/Death Watch**, which transforms Death's lovely face into a skeletal visage once every minute. It's no wonder this watch sold out in record time—it's one of the best watch designs the comic book field has ever seen.

Fossil's **Rocketeer Watch** takes another approach: in a market deluged with cheap, disposable watches, Fossil has made a quality watch that would be attractive even without the Rocketeer Design. Now, if only it had come out during that brief three-week period when audiences were actually going to see the film...

"Close But No Cigar" Award

Detective 627
Honorable Mention: Adventures of Captain America

DC made a big deal over the 600th appearance of Batman in **Detective Comics**. The problem was, they missed by one—Batman's 600th appearance was actually in **Detective #626**. Betcha they get the 700th appearance right, though!

Adventures of Captain America, the series that showed everyone how good the **Captain America** film could have been if they had asked Fabian Nicieza to write it, was originally promoted as part of Cap's 50th Anniversary celebration—but due to delay after delay, the book ultimately didn't make it onto the comic shop racks until the remainder of Cap's 50th Anniversary celebration had come to an end. (Maybe they should start now on the hundredth issue, just to be safe...)



"Bright Idea" Award

CyberRad 5

Both Marvel and DC came up with glow-in-the-dark covers before Continuity did—but Continuity outshone everyone else when it comes to creativity. In effect, they gave fans two covers: one to be enjoyed while the lights are on and another that can only be appreciated when the lights are turned off.

The End Zone Award

Kitchen Sink's Spirit

Denis Kitchen has always said that he would reprint every **Spirit** section in comic book form—and that's just what he did. Oh, the final issues haven't hit the stores quite yet, but they're already ordered and on their way. It's nice to see a publisher dedicated enough to quality in comics that he'll stick to the very end rather than abandoning it to move on to some trendy fan-favorite publishing project.

The Price Is Right Award

All those price guides

Remember in the old days, when there was only one comic book price guide per year? Last year, fans had a choice of some twenty-eight different price guides—and this year, there will be more than three dozen different price guides to choose

from. Maybe someone will start a price guide for all the price guides...

"Big Bang" Award

Valiant Comics

Very few fans were around for the beginnings of the DC Universe or the Marvel Universe; not so with Valiant Comics, a company that has methodically developed a complex, interwoven universe, introducing a book at a time so that readers could watch the entire universe unfold before them, one comic at a time. This is a much more reader-friendly system than most publishers have used recently when they've unveiled new comics universes—and one that seems to be earning them lots of appreciative fans.



"Volume, Volume, Volume!" Award

X-Force 1
Twilight Zone 1
Robin II: Joker's Wild 1-4
X-Men 1
Batman Vs. Predator 1

Who'd think it? Not once, not twice, but eight different times, publishers managed to convince fans to buy multiple copies of the same comic in order to get all the different covers/cards/holograms. Hey, if you can't boost the number of readers, then get 'em to buy in bulk!

The Good News-Bad News Award

Photo-Journal Guide to Comics Volume 3-4

The good news is that this affordable set offers a wonderful collection of Marvel's covers, making it a great companion volume to the first two books, which spotlight the Golden Age and early Silver Age. The bad news, though, is that if you buy the reasonably-priced set, you get virtually none of those wonderful pre-hero covers that, in many cases, helped to set the tone of the early Marvel Silver Age. Those covers are only available in the extremely-high-priced deluxe set—which costs a whopping \$70 more than the regular edition. Come on, guys, would sixteen more pages really have added that much to the cost?

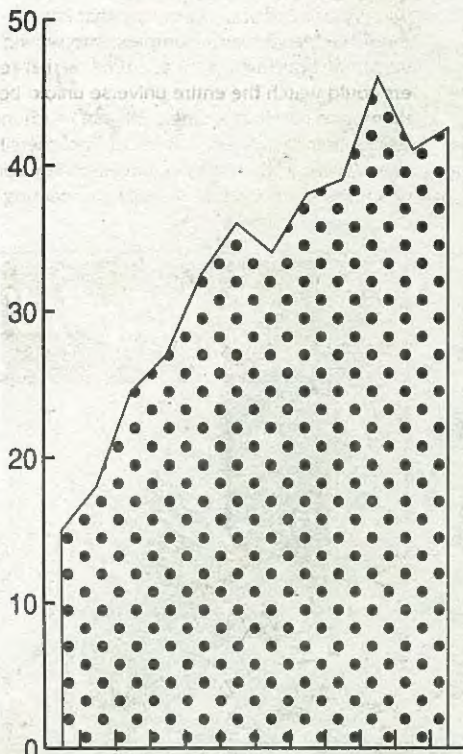
MIA Award

Dave Stevens' Rocketeer Classics Illustrated

What better time to release the long-awaited

third issue of the Rocketeer comic than in the summer when the big-budget film debuts? Well, that's what Dark Horse thought, too—but alas, it was not to be...and now another year has passed without the concluding installment of this storyline. Maybe by the time the movie hits cable...

The demise of *Classics Illustrated* was the most unfortunate result of the First Comics Implosion; at least *Nexus* has found another home, and there are rumors that *Badger* and *Grimjack* may show up elsewhere as well—but the *Classics Illustrated* series seems destined to be remain MIA (and just a couple of months before that great Wayne Vansant *Red Badge of Courage* adaptation finally appeared).



The NYSE Guys Award

Marvel Comics

Marvel has produced a lot of comics that have skyrocketed in value in a few months—but who would have thought that their stock, which went on the market this past summer, would end up being one of the stock market superheroes of the year? The initial offering was \$16.50 a share, but before 1991 was over, Marvel stock was soaring near \$45 a share. Now, if Marvel would only offer the stock with five different illustrations, and collectors' cards! (Special mention has to be given to the *Marvel Comics Quarterly Report*, a four-page coverstock comic book conversation

between Hulk and Spider-Man that collectors will be clamoring for in a few months.)

The New Math Award

"Double-sized" comics

In most fields, double means "times two"; in the comic book field, though, it apparently means "times one and a half." A lot of publishers advertise "double-sized" anniversary issues that are actually only 48 pages long, or one and a half times the normal 32-page comic book length.

The Halftime Award

Cerebus

Dave Sim has insisted all along that *Cerebus* was a three-hundred-issue maxi-series—and this year, he reached the halfway mark with the release of *Cerebus #150*. Rather than turn this halfway-mark issue into a pat-on-the-back exercise in self-congratulation, though, he continued telling *Cerebus'* complex tale just as he did in the issues before and after. (Of course, we should also note that *Cerebus* is the longest-running independent comic in history—and in a field littered with the corpses of dead independent publishing companies, that's another accomplishment that deserves accolades.)

The Change-Of-Plans Award

Armageddon 2001 Special #2

Are we the only ones who noticed that it seemed like, halfway through *Armageddon 2001 Special #2*, someone decided to change the identity of Monarch? Everything was heading toward the climactic revelation that Captain was Monarch—then suddenly we have a change of plans and Hawk becomes Monarch, leaving readers with a very unsatisfying ending to what had been the best crossover series of the entire year.

The Andy Warhol Award

Unauthorized Biography Comics

Andy Warhol once said that everyone would be a star for fifteen minutes; with the plethora of unauthorized biographical comics out there, that may be more true than we think. At the rate all these publishers are churning out a mixed bag of biographies of celebrities and semi-celebrities, everyone should be able to have his own unauthorized bio book in a few years.

CSN CHARTS

TOP 50 COMICS

CSN's Top Seller charts are based on figures supplied by the two major distributors, Diamond Distribution and Capital City Distribution, as well as figures by a cross-section of comics specialty shops. The distributor's figures represent retailer orders placed on the titles, while the information from stores represents copies sold.

1. X-Men 5
2. Uncanny X-Men 285
3. X-Force 7
4. Warlock & the Infinity Watch 1
5. Robin II Joker's Wild 4 (w/hologram)
6. Spider-Man 19
7. X-Factor 75
8. Hearts of Darkness
9. Wolverine 51
10. Punisher 60
11. Batman Vs. Predator 2 (Prestige Format)
12. Amazing Spider-Man 359
13. Batman & Judge Dredd: Judgement o Gotham
14. Ghost Rider 22
15. Star Wars: Dark Empire 1
16. Lobo Paramilitary Christmas Special
17. Incredible Hulk 390
18. Silver Surfer 62
19. Marvel Comics Presents 95
20. Marvel Comics Presents 96
21. Batman: Legends of the Dark Knight 27
22. Batman 474
23. Deathlok 8
24. Aliens: Genocide 3
25. New Warriors 20
26. Batman Vs. Predator (deluxe)
27. Adventures of Captain America 4
28. Predator: Cold War 4
29. Batman: Legends of the Dark Knight 26
30. Darkhawk 12
31. Excalibur 47
32. Detective 641
33. Terminator: Enemy Within 3
34. Agent Liberty Special 1
35. Punisher War Journal 39
36. Guardians of the Galaxy 21
37. Robin II Joker's Wild 4 (w/o holograms)
38. Armageddon: Alien Agenda 4
39. Batman: Master of the Future
40. Deathstroke the Terminator 7
41. Spectacular Spider-Man 185
42. Web of Spider-Man 85
43. Excalibur Special Edition
44. Daredevil 301
45. Namor 23
46. Aquaman 3
47. Fantastic Four 361
48. Wonder Man 6
49. Avengers 344
50. Ray 1

TOP DOLLAR COMICS

The following comics, graphic novels and trade paperbacks were given Top Dollar ratings based on the dollar volume of the copies sold (or are expected to sell) during the late January and February sales period.

1. Hearts of Darkness
2. Batman Vs. Predator 2 (Prestige format)
3. Batman/Judge Dredd: Judgment on Gotham
4. X-Men 5
5. Warlock and the Infinity Watch 1
6. Adventures of Captain America 4
7. Batman: Master of the Future
8. Uncanny X-Men 285
9. Spider-Man 19
10. X-Factor 75
11. X-Force 7
12. Wolverine 51
13. Robin II Joker's Wild 4 (w/ holograms)
14. Excalibur Special Edition
15. Star Wars: Dark Empire 1
16. Lobo Paramilitary Christmas Special
17. Ghost Rider 22
18. Aliens: Genocide 3
19. Batman: Legends of the Dark Knight 27
20. Predator: Cold War 4
21. Terminator: Enemy Within 4
22. Punisher Bloodlines
23. Star Trek VI Movie Adaptation (prestige)
24. Deathlok 8
25. Punisher 60
26. Batman Vs. Predator 2 (deluxe)
27. Agent Liberty Special 1
28. Amazing Spider-Man 359
29. Batman: Legends of the Dark Knight 26
30. Excalibur 47
31. Marvel Comics Presents 95
32. Marvel Comics Presents 96
33. Spider-Man Saga 4
34. Incredible Hulk 390
35. Silver Surfer 62
36. Punisher War Journal 39
37. Thing From Another World 1
38. Deathstroke the Terminator 7
39. New Warriors 20
40. Darkhawk 12
41. Guardians of the Galaxy 21
42. Batman 474
43. Tomb of Dracula 3
44. Spectacular Spider-Man 185
45. Detective 641
46. Web of Spider-Man 85
47. Robin II: Joker's Wild 4 (w/o holograms)
48. Griffin 4
49. Daredevil 301
50. Hellblazer 50

TOP 10 BLACK & WHITE COMICS

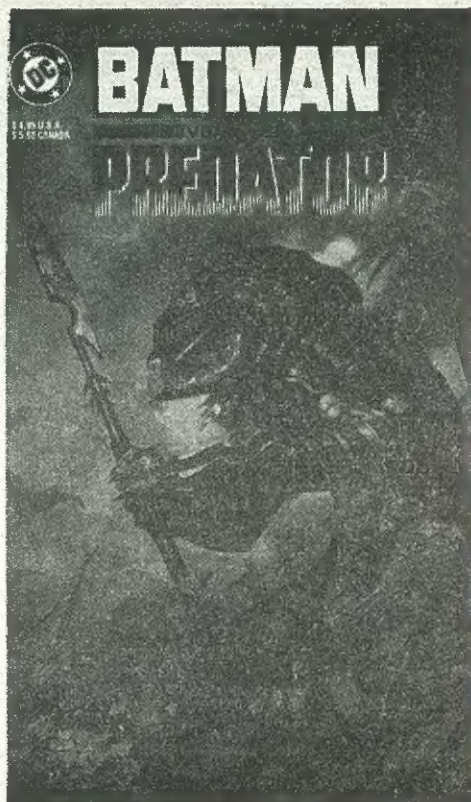
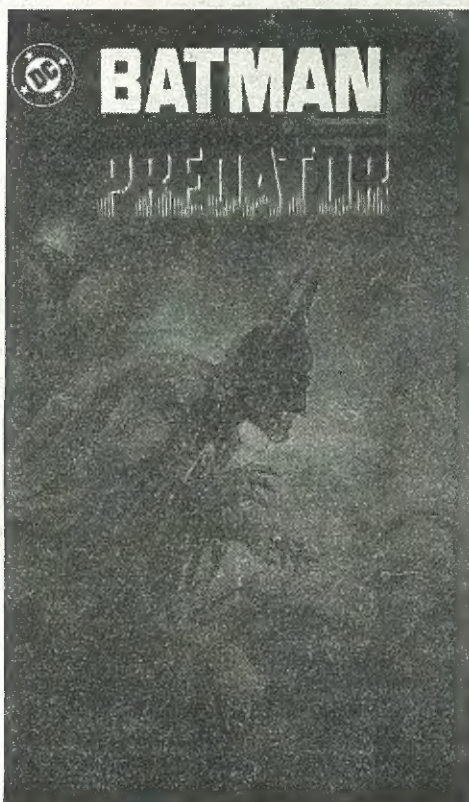
1. OMAC 4
2. Dark Horse Presents 57
3. Mask 0
4. Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles 42
5. Savage Sword 43
6. Evil Ernie 1
7. Venus Wars 9
8. Badlands 6
9. Cages 4
10. Captain Harlock Christmas Special 1

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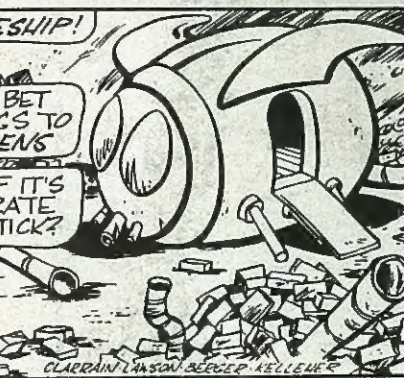
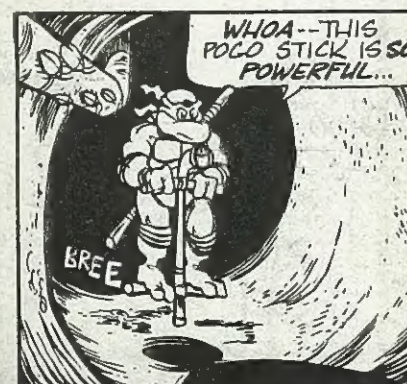
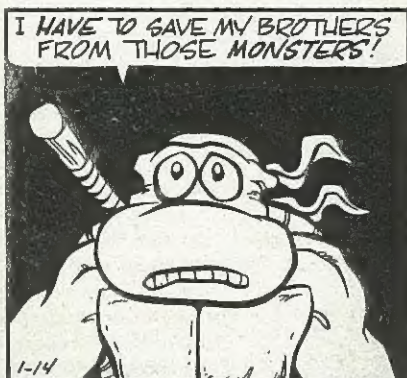
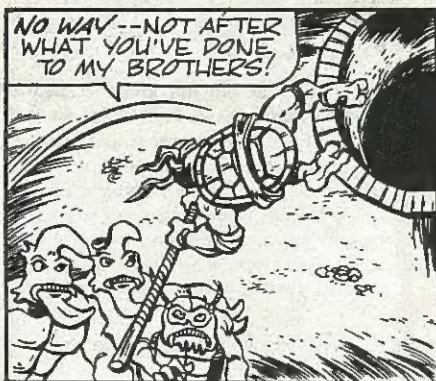
TOP TEN NON-COMICS

The Top Ten Non-Comics is based on number and not dollar value. This category includes graphic novels, hardcovers, trade paperbacks, portfolios, etc. It includes books that actually were on sale during the January sales period.

1. Marvel Year In Review 1991
2. Punisher: An Eye For An Eye
3. Lobo Slipcase Special
4. Punisher: Blood on the Moors
5. Batman: Blind Justice
6. Marvel Universe 15
7. DC Who's Who 15
8. Marvel Masterworks 19: Silver Surfer 6-18
9. Wizard 5
10. D. R. & Quinch (color GN)



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I THINK PEOPLE SHOULD STOP CUTTING DOWN THE RAINFORESTS. EVERY TIME THEY DO, THEY'RE MAKING IT WHERE ANIMALS DO NOT HAVE PLACES TO LIVE. AND WITHOUT A PLACE TO LIVE, THEY DIE.

KATHY PIERCE, HICKORY VALLEY, TN

The Everything-Old-Is-New-Again Award

Legion of Super-Heroes

A few years back, DC cancelled the long-running *Legion of Super-Heroes* series and, after a few months, brought the book back *In medias res*--and it took readers months to put together enough clues to get some idea just what was going on. Well, now DC is moving away from the new Legion format and back to the heroes-in-costumes super-team premise that made the Legion great to begin with--and maybe fans will finally be able to figure out just what's going on!...



The Dreaded-Deadline-Doom Award

Eclipse's Comics Creators Cards

For many years now, fans have been accustomed to hear that books were late because creators hadn't been able to get everything done by the deadline. Isn't it ironic that the first cards to spotlight comic book creators would also be late?...months late?...

LAST WEEK'S 12-PAGE ISSUE FEATURED A SNEAK PEAK AT DC'S NEW VIGILANTE (SHE'S DANGEROUS), THE UPCOMING DEATHLOK/GHOST RIDER TEAM-UP, PLUS REVIEWS OF BATMAN: GOTHAM NIGHTS 1, MADMAN 1, SHADO 1 AND PUNISHER: WAR ZONE 1.

NEXT WEEK'S COVER FEATURE IS ROB LIEFELD'S YOUNGBLOOD WHICH LOOKS TO BE ONE OF THE HOTTEST RELEASES OF THE SEASON, PLUS THE COMPLETE COMICS CHECKLIST FOR FEBRUARY.

COMIC SHOP NEWS

IF YOU MISS A WEEK...

...YOU MISS A LOT!

RED K AWARDS

7



The Detente Award

Batman Vs. Predator
Batman-Judge Dredd: Judgement in Gotham
Crossover Classics

It seemed like the big multi-company crossover was an extinct species, didn't it? After all, it's been almost a decade now since the appearance of the *X-Men-Teen Titans* crossover that marked the end to the first era of Marvel-DC collaborative efforts. This year, though, proved that the crossover still had a little life left in it after all—a lot of life, in fact! These books generated more excitement than pretty much anything else on the shelves this Christmas season, and for good reason—these books contain some pretty nifty stories as well as some interesting premises.



The "Beam-'Em-Down" Award

Impel's Star Trek holograms
Honorable Mention: Impel's Star Trek Series I

Okay, the holograms were really great, as were the cards—but in the case of the holograms, the average number of holos seems to be a half-dozen per case. Fans bought multiple boxes of cards without even realizing they were holograms! And why did they buy those multiple boxes? Well, because the card-distribution-per-box on the first series of *Star Trek* cards was so quirky that it took most fans at least two boxes to complete one set of *Star Trek Series I* cards. Thankfully, Impel has corrected that problem

with the second *Star Trek* series, which generally contains at least one full set per box. Now, could you guys do something about the holograms?...

The Full Deck Award

Impel Cards

A year ago, virtually no one in comics had heard of Impel—but this year, thanks to the success of their *Marvel*, *Disney*, *Terminator II*, and *Star Trek* cards, they've become Numero Uno in the comics/sf-related card field. High quality cards, original artwork, great reproduction, bonus holograms—Impel has given fans a first-class product in a time when all too many cards companies are churning out shoddy cards that badly reproduce already-published artwork. However, before we make it all sound too wonderful, maybe we should go on to the next award...



The Mug Shots Award

DC's Batman & Superman Mugs

Comics-related mugs aren't a new idea—but DC gave it an innovative twist with their clever mugs that features a sculpted image of the hero on the handle of the mug. It's a nifty design that makes these mugs something special rather than another run-of-the-mill mug to bury in the back of your cupboard. Hurrahs to DC for making a truly original collectible!

SFX Award

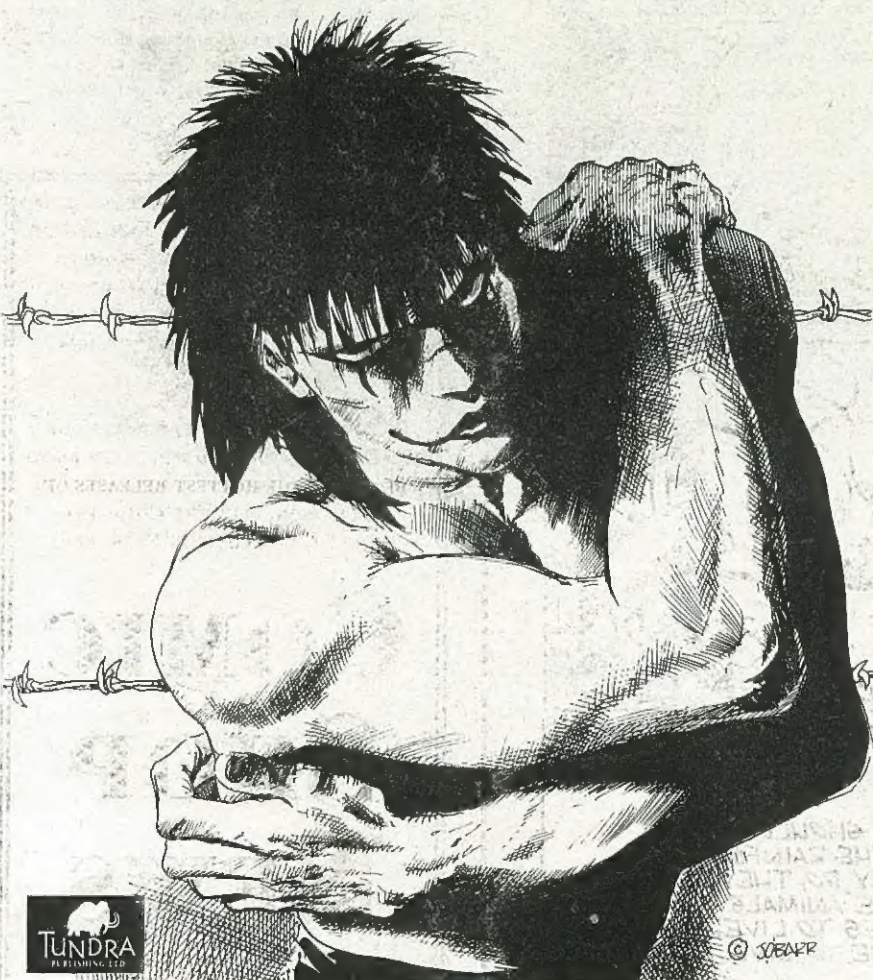
Terminator One Shot

Most publishers have put a lot of thought into how to make comic book covers more attention-getting—but Dark Horse Comics put their efforts inside the book with the first-ever comic book pop-up. Too bad Marvel didn't think of including one in the *Impossible Man Summer Special*—after all, he's from the planet Pop-up, so what could be more appropriate?...

That's it for our part of the 1992 Red K Awards—but what about your part? Last year, fans sent in dozens of their own ideas for Red K Awards, and we're encouraging you to send some of your best awards in to CSN this year as well. We'll run the best of 'em in the next couple of months, so let us know what we overlooked. Send your awards to CSN Red K Awards, 2339 Millstead Circle, Marietta GA 30066.

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Volume One includes the impossible-to-find issues 1 & 2—Available January 1992
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Volume Three presents for the first time the explosive conclusion—Available May 1992
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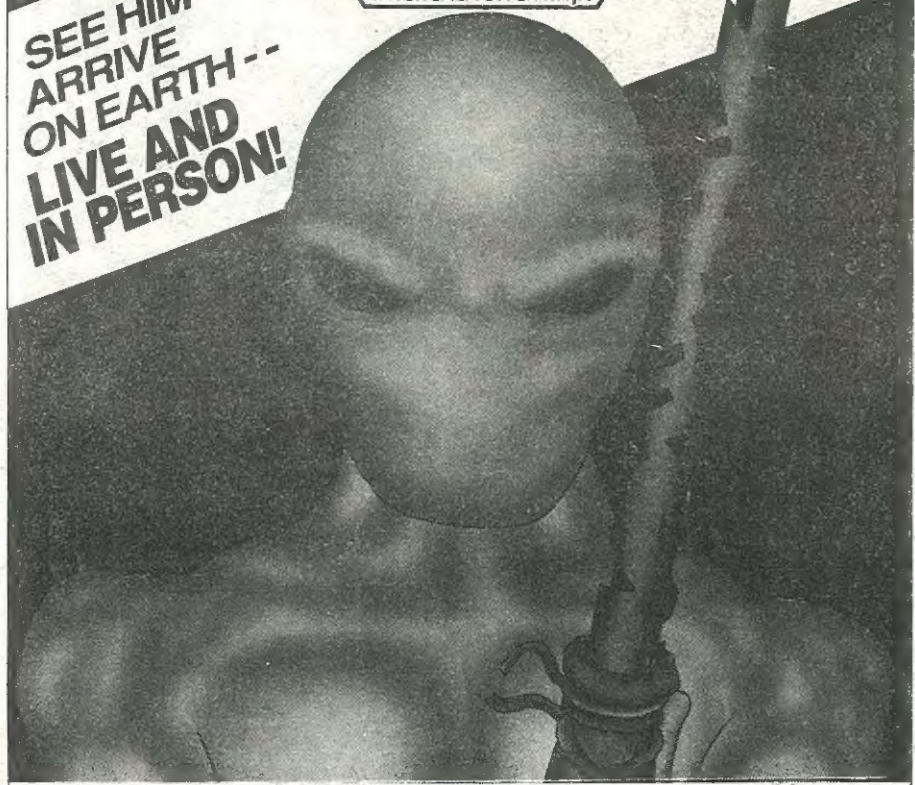


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COMIC SHOP NEWS



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ARRIVE
ON EARTH --
LIVE AND
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